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GANDHIAN TECHNIQUES
in
THE MODERN WORLD

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INTRODUCTION

The Seminar on the Contribution of Gandhian Outlook and Techniques to the Solution of Tensions between and within Nations, held last January in New Delhi, brought together a group of international thinkers occupying positions of eminence in their respective spheres. Starting with widely different and dissimilar backgrounds of religious belief, social traditions, economic environment and systems of government, they shared in common the ideal of world peace and were eager to explore the possibility of its realization by the application of the Gandhian techniques, viz. truth and non-violence. I could not, therefore, say 'no' when the invitation came and agreed to interrupt my biography work to participate in the Seminar.

The delegates were to contribute a formal paper on any of the various aspects of the Gandhian outlook for the consideration of the Seminar. I felt that the best service I could render to the Seminar would be to put on record in a brief compass as complete an outline as possible of the science of non-violence as propounded by Gandhiji, its nature and scope, the techniques of its application and how they worked out in relation to the various problems confronting the modern world. This brochure is the result.

In sending the paper for publication, I have restored some of the passages that I had to take out from the text submitted to the Seminar, to reduce its size. The reader will notice that I have at places drawn freely upon some portions of my previous booklet, *A Nation Builder at Work* and some of my recent writings in *Harijan*. It could not be otherwise considering the nature of the subject dealt with and the severe handicaps under which I was working.

New Delhi,
25th March 1953.

PYARELAL

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GANDHIAN TECHNIQUES IN THE MODERN WORLD

GANDHIAN TECHNIQUES IN THE MODERN WORLD

We are living in an age of mounting tensions — tensions between group and group, class and class, nation and nation. In thought humanity has advanced. Never before perhaps has the acceptance of the ideals of equality, brotherhood and world peace been so ubiquitous, and yet never has humanity or human values stood nearer to the brink of total destruction than they do today under the menace of the atomic bomb. The explanation for the paradox lies in the contradiction between the ends and means that characterizes the present age.

When we use brute force to settle a problem, it sets into motion an opposite force of a like character which in its turn necessitates the use of greater force, and so the chain of retaliation and counter retaliation lengthens and strengthens. From the clubs of the primitive

warriors we came to bows and arrows ; bows and arrows led to fire arms ; fire arms created the need for artillery and that in its turn created the atom bomb and the H. bomb.

This then is the explanation of mounting tensions in a world sick for calm. When both sides resort to the same or similar means they inevitably partake each the character of the other. There is an ancient myth, I think in one of the Greek classics, of a Knight and a Python engaging in a duel. Furiously they attack each other, neither side asking for quarter or giving any, neither of them yields an inch of ground. In the end a strange thing happens. Instead of either party vanquishing the other, they are transformed one into the other ! And in our own times, did we not see indiscriminate bombing of the Luftwaffe being outmoded by the saturation bombing of the Allied Air Forces, and the whole thing culminating in the mass murder of the innocent and the guilty alike at Hiroshima and Nagasaki ? In Korea both sides are resorting to the same means, with the result that the " war of liberation " is turning into a " war of annihilation " of the very people that are sought to be delivered. The ideologies of the parties may run counter to each other, but inasmuch as both sides are resorting to the same means, in the end there seems to be nothing left to choose between the one and the other.

Another instance, if one were needed, of how the means determine the end is provided by

the Communist experiment. The professed aim is to create a Stateless, classless, free society on the basis of absolute equality ; a society from which all violence has been eliminated. But this end is sought to be achieved by violent means. The result is civil coercion and civil violence on a scale which is staggering, and the State instead of showing any sign of withering away, has become more absolute, more authoritarian and more all-embracing than any we know of today. The inner compulsion of the means for achieving a goal seems completely to overrule the conscious will of those who employ them and dictates a line of advance which was never contemplated.

Is there a way of getting out of this vicious circle ? Is there a force different from and better suited for resolving tensions than brute force ? Gandhiji showed us one. He gave it the name Satyagraha i.e. the power of Truth. He also called it Soul Force because it opposes to the material force of the opponent the power of the spirit. The simplest illustration of this power in action is when a child struck by its irate mother clings to her for protection and thereby not only subdues her anger but converts it into overflowing love.

II

What is the nature of this force? What are the laws governing it? How can it be organized and turned into an instrument of action? And finally, what are the techniques of its application to various situations?

To begin with, Satyagraha or Soul Force is power, energy—as objective and capable of producing tangible results in society as, say, steam or electricity, but infinitely subtler, more potent and all-pervasive. It is the opposite of brute force. It represents the power of Ahimsa or non-violence which, in its positive aspect, is known as love.

Secondly, it does not depend for its propagation on the material medium; it is self-acting.

Thirdly, it is governed by laws which are as definite, precise and capable of being objectified as physical laws. It has its science—an exact science, which lends itself to investigation, experimentation and demonstration. But it is yet a very incomplete science. At the time of his death, its author was still experimenting with it.

There is, however, one important difference between the laws of Satyagraha and the laws of physical science. The laws of physical science are inert laws; those governing Satyagraha are living laws subject to the principle of growth, evolution, adaptation and change. The instruments which a physicist, for instance, uses

consist of inert matter. In Satyagraha the instruments are living, *sentient* beings, as is also the material acted upon. The science of Satyagraha, therefore, does not admit of being stated in rigid, static formulas or set theories ; it represents laws and principles in a state of flux. Satyagraha, therefore, does not admit of mechanical repetition of a set pattern of conduct. The Satyagrahi is very often precluded from seeing more than the next step in front of him. He does not plan in advance his next move. He prepares himself for it by attuning himself to the laws of Satyagraha by dint of rigorous self-discipline, self-analysis and sustained correct practice in terms of truth and non-violence.

III

Gandhiji derived his theory of Satyagraha from his doctrine of Truth. Finite man cannot grasp the whole truth — not even relative truth in its entirety. What may, therefore, appear as truth to one person may appear to be error to another person. And yet both of them may be right from their respective points of view. Proceeding on this reasoning, Gandhiji early came to the conclusion that pursuit of truth does not admit of violence being inflicted upon one's opponent. Therefore, the doctrine of truth or Satya, which Gandhiji described by the word Satyagraha or holding on to truth, means

vindication of truth by bearing witness to it through self-suffering; in other words, love. Ahimsa and Truth are thus the obverse and reverse of the same coin — one is the means, the other the end.

Gandhiji's Satyagraha was not an abstract philosophy but a philosophy in action. Truth to him meant not the uttered word, not the professed belief but something that has to be lived. If we say one thing and do another, profess one thing and do not practise it, we live untruth. The hiatus between thought and word, profession and practice acts as a damper and chokes the action of soul force which is latent in every being. To work out in full in his life all the implications of the ideals he professed, was Gandhiji's *sadhana* or striving for truth. In his case, it took the form of strict observance — with their full implications — of the five cardinal vows of Truth, Ahimsa, non-possession, non-stealing, and Brahmacharya or chastity. The last four are the natural corollaries to and flowed from the first. I must not enter into an explanation of these here. Suffice it to say that while the principle of the practice of truth as one sees it is basic to the development of the power of Satyagraha, its implications, and therefore the forms of discipline, will vary according to the norms in vogue in different orders of society. The one thing which is unvarying is that one's practice must conform to belief. There must be complete

accord between thought, word and deed. Arguing on this basis Gandhiji went so far as to say that for the success of a Satyagraha movement he did not need believers in the theory of non-violence, full or imperfect, so far as the rank and file were concerned. It was enough for his purpose if they carried out the rules of non-violent action in a sincere, disciplined soldierly spirit. For leadership in Satyagraha, naturally, discipline and training of a higher type are required.

What happens, how does Satyagraha work? Attempts have been made to explain it in terms of modern psychology. Courageous, innocent suffering, by purging the emotions of the opponent of anger, fear and pride makes him more receptive to new attitudes and values. Self-purification that accrues to the Satyagrahi by his loving self-suffering, on the other hand, enables him to have a more understanding and sympathetic appreciation of the opponent's view point; his weaknesses and redeeming virtues. All this prepares the way for what is known as "integration". Integration consists in first "analysing the expressed desire of the opponent into its elements and more fundamental meanings and then working out a wholly new solution which satisfies all or most of the fundamental needs of both the parties in a situation" so that there is no balked feeling at the end on either side. Let those who feel interested refer for further study to Richard Gregg's classic on the subject, *The Power*

*of Non-violence.** Here are two extremely illuminating instances mentioned by him: (1) "An insistence on having a table in a certain place in a room might really mean a wish to have light on one's writing while working at the table, together with an inability to see how it could be secured in any other way; (2) An insistence upon political control of a certain territory may mean a need for food and industrial raw material and a desire to satisfy pride, and inability to see how the satisfaction of these needs can be made wholly secure in any other way." In both the cases there will not be much difficulty in finding alternative ways of satisfying the need in question, once the inner meaning of the insistence is understood.

The explanation, however, cannot be considered to be complete. In the ultimate analysis the action of Satyagraha proceeds through the technique of "identification" and "involvement". By suffering for truth and justice in his own person cheerfully instead of inflicting suffering upon the opponent, the Satyagrahi establishes spiritual identity with the opponent and awakens in him the feeling that he cannot hurt him (the Satyagrahi) without hurting his own personality.

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IV

Here, it is necessary to note the distinction between Satyagraha and passive resistance. Passive resistance can be an expression of one's anger; Satyagraha is an expression of the purest Ahimsa or love. It precludes hatred, anger, deception and untruth; it is the opposite of coercion. A Satyagrahi is not out to injure or destroy the opponent but to convert him and turn him into an ally. Again, passive resistance is the weapon of the weak. Gandhiji called it the "coward's expedient". A passive resister would resort to force if he could. A Satyagrahi adopts non-violence as a weapon of choice because he feels that it has a potency greater than that possessed by any other weapon known. It is the weapon of the brave — it calls for courage of the highest type. "A Satyagrahi is ever ready to forgive personal wrongs. But since abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish, it becomes meaningless when it proceeds from a feeling of helplessness." Gandhiji summed up the principle of Satyagraha in the form of an equation: Man for man, the strength of non-violence is in exact proportion to the ability, not the will, of the non-violent person to inflict injury.

V

The principle of Ahimsa or non-violence is as old as the hills but whereas non-violence used to be regarded before as a passive attitude, good for individuals aspiring to attain spiritual beatitude, Gandhiji showed how it could be made dynamic and effectively used as a method for the redress of wrongs and establishment of social justice. Oppression and exploitation, Gandhiji argued, are made possible only by the co-operation, willing or forced, of the oppressed in their own exploitation or oppression, through cupidity, ignorance or fear. If all good people ceased completely to co-operate with an unjust or a tyrannous system, it must collapse under the weight of its own unadulterated iniquity. Non-co-operation with evil thus takes the form of self-purification in the Satyagrahi himself, and withdrawal on his part of co-operation from the institution which embodies the evil. If non-co-operation is complete, non-violent and universal, it must bring to its knees even the mightiest power. When all efforts to affect the upholder of an evil system by argument, negotiation, petitions and the like have failed, the only remedy left to one, if one does not want to submit or become party to a wrong, is to refuse to co-operate with it and suffer non-violently the consequence. For instance, one may disobey in a non-violent manner unjust laws promulgated by the Government in question, or even laws that

are not by themselves evil but are used to support an evil system. Satyagraha then appears as Civil Disobedience or Civil Resistance. It is civil in the sense that it is not criminal.

Civil disobedience is of various types — defensive, aggressive, individual, collective and mass. Each of these types has its special characteristics, rules and techniques. It requires a good deal of experience, training and insight in a leader of Satyagraha to determine which type is to be employed in a particular situation or set of circumstances. The rough rule is that the emphasis must be more on quality than on numbers "when the forces of violence are uppermost."

To be effective, non-co-operation must be an expression of one's anguish rather than anger. A wife who refuses to part with her ornaments to her drunkard husband and braves his beating, yet never ceases to love and serve him, uses this weapon in its purest form and in the end weans her husband from drink. In the same way, a good citizen will refuse to offer co-operation to Government with a view to wean it from wrong-doing out of his very desire to co-operate with it consistently with truth and justice. He will, therefore, bear no ill-will or grudge towards the agents of the Government with whom he is non-co-operating. Nor will he want to take advantage of its difficulty. " His non-co-operation is but a prelude to co-operation on honourable terms."

Non-co-operation to be successful must

mean co-operation amongst all the sections of the community. That calls for the removal of glaring economic inequalities and social injustices that create the gulf between haves and have-nots, the upperdog and the underdog; it calls for equal respect for faiths and religions other than one's own and a broad tolerance in regard to the beliefs and practices of other members of the community. To knit together in a common bond of fellowship the millions and weave the pattern of non-violent conduct into their lives, Gandhiji devised his eighteen-fold constructive programme and set up a number of constructive organizations to work it out. He called it constructive non-violence.

Equivalent forms of activity suited to Western conditions for inculcating non-violent discipline have illustratively been worked out by Richard Gregg in his *A Discipline for Non-violence*,* to which those who might feel interested are referred. Constructive work is for a non-violent army what drilling etc. is for an army designed for bloody warfare. Such preparation, Gandhiji found, was not essential for non-violent resistance or a civil disobedience plan by individuals on a small scale and for the redress of specific or local grievances, but for vital issues involving large numbers of men such training in constructive work was an absolute necessity. "Trust begotten in the pursuit of

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continuous constructive work becomes a tremendous asset at the critical moment. Individual civil disobedience among an unprepared people or by leaders not known to or trusted by them is of no avail, and mass civil disobedience is an impossibility."

An outstanding feature of Gandhiji's Satyagraha was the elemental simplicity of its plan. It arose directly from the choice of his weapons. Non-violence is the strength of the weak. It works best through apparently small and insignificant things. It depends for its potency on its capacity for repetition by large numbers of humble, simple, unsophisticated folk. Gandhiji found that little things performed by millions of people together produce results out of all proportion to what any individual can achieve or than the sum of all the individual efforts taken separately. He, therefore, sought for a type of activity that could be understood and practised by the millions — even by women, children, illiterate village folk and others whom we regard as weak. That also explains his emphasis on the spinning wheel and the phenomenal use to which he put it as a symbol and instrument of non-violent political struggle.

The same simplicity characterized his technique of propaganda. It rested on the capacity of truth to propagate itself when it is expressed in action rather than on the adroit repetition of a lie. His experience showed that no amount of the latter can for long prevail against the former.

VI

A text-book example almost of the application of Satyagraha for the removal of racial discrimination is provided by the story of the South African Satyagraha struggle*. The Indian community in South Africa that had been introduced there, in the first instance, by the Europeans to provide themselves with cheap indentured labour, was sought later to be disfranchised by discriminative legislation owing to the fear of competition in trade felt by the Whites but mainly owing to race prejudice. Indians were harassed by extra-legal means, subjected to harsh humiliating, insulting treatment and discriminated against on railways, buses, tramways and in hotels. When petitions, deputations and popular agitation of the orthodox type had failed, Civil Disobedience was resorted to. The Indians refused to take out registration certificates and publicly burnt those that they had. They courted imprisonment by breaking the Union laws deliberately. Women picketed the mines and induced the Indian labourers to come out. In the final stage thousands of Indians — men, women and children (above the age of sixteen) marched in an orderly fashion into Transvaal in contravention of the Union law prohibiting their entry into it. When one batch of leaders was arrested, others took their place,

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but the march continued till they were all put under arrest and lodged in jail. The struggle lasted for nearly 20 years, but it was carried out without rancour on the Indian side. When the struggle was at its height a strike broke out among the European railwaymen of South Africa, who were not wedded to non-violence. Not to add to the embarrassment of the authorities, the leader of the Satyagraha suspended the Satyagraha struggle till the railway strike was over. Almost immediate results followed. General Smuts had to yield. Twenty-five years afterwards he put on record his experience of the struggle as follows : " We had a skeleton in our cup-board in the form of what is called the Indian question in South Africa . . . His (Gandhi's) method was to break the law . . . . . large numbers of Indians had to be imprisoned for lawless behaviour . . . . . For him (Gandhi) everything went according to plan. For me — the defender of law and order — there was the usual trying situation, the odium of carrying out a law which had not strong public support, and finally discomfiture when the law had to be repealed." In 1931 and again in 1943 when Gandhiji was up against heavy odds, literally immured alive behind the prison walls, it was General Smuts who stood up for him and defended him against false British propaganda.

VII

An outstanding source of tension in the present day world is the struggle between labour and capital. The reason why in the fight against the capitalistic exploitation labour very often fails, said Gandhiji, is that instead of sterilizing the power of capital by refusing to be party to its own exploitation, labour wants to seize capital and become capitalist in its turn. Thereby it puts itself at a disadvantage. The capitalists are better equipped for the game — better organized and better entrenched. They find in the ranks of labour candidates aspiring for the capitalistic role and make use of them to suppress labour. On the day that labour realizes that ultimately it is not pieces of so-called precious metal that constitute true capital but productive, useful labour and learns to effectively wield the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation, the citadel of exploitation would fall. Gandhiji envisaged all industry as a joint enterprise of labour and capital. Accordingly, in the conduct of labour strikes, the attitude he inculcated on labour was that they must regard the interest of the industry as a whole as their own and direct their attack against the corruption, injustice, inefficiency and short-sighted greed of the owners. By inculcating this attitude, he was able to mobilize the better sense of the owners of industry to his side. By his insistence upon non-violence he was able to

disarm their fear, and by making it a fundamental condition that the demands of the strikers must be clear, feasible and just he was able to enlist the sympathy of the public on the side of labour. Further, to insure non-violence on the part of the strikers, he recommended that the strikers must acquire skill in some manual craft so that they might not have to depend altogether upon the strike fund to keep themselves and their families going during a prolonged strike. The readiness and ability of the strikers to perform socially useful labour provided too a nexus between the strikers and the public and a medium of co-operation amongst the strikers themselves. It kept up their morale as nothing else could.

VIII

The most potent form of Satyagraha is fasting. It is also the most dangerous because it can be so easily misapplied. Fasting may be for penance and self-purification, it may be as atonement for wrong done by those we cherish, to chastize and bring them to repentance, or it may be as a protest against a glaring injustice and a challenge to the conscience of society. Barring the first, fasting presupposes that the person who launches on a fast has established a claim upon the love and consideration of those to whom it is addressed. It cannot be addressed to those who regard him as their enemy. It then becomes a form of coercion. Finally, it requires a high degree of purity,

self-discipline, humility and faith on the part of the faster. The right to it does not accrue to the lazy or the spiritually undisciplined but to him only who is spiritually wideawake and has proved his sincerity and earnestness by his strenuous endeavour to serve the cause for which he is out to suffer. It is not the physical act of fasting, but the spiritual content of the fast that gives it its potency. When it is properly done, it stirs up as nothing else the "sluggish consciences and fires loving hearts to action......Those who have to bring about radical changes in human conditions and surroundings cannot do it except by raising ferment in society. There are only two methods of doing this — violence and non-violence. Non-violent pressure exerted through self-suffering by fasting......touches and strengthens the moral fibre of those against whom it is directed."

Of such a type was Gandhiji's Yeravda Pact fast, as a result of which the British Government's decision regarding the electoral arrangements for the "Scheduled Castes" (Untouchables) was reversed and the ages-old citadel of untouchability laid low.

During the Second Indian Round Table Conference in 1931 the British Government had announced that owing to the failure of the Indian delegates to find a solution to the communal question, the Government would devise its own solution. Gandhiji felt that segregation of the Scheduled Castes into a separate electorate would create a formidable political vested

interest in the institution of "untouchability" which would arrest internal reform, perpetuate the "bar sinister" and disrupt Hindu society of which the so-called "depressed classes" constituted an integral part. This would be good neither for the "depressed classes" nor for Hindu society, nor for India but would only enable the British Government to use the "depressed classes" as a pawn in the political game of divide and rule. Wedded as he was to the complete eradication of untouchability, Gandhiji declared in the Conference that if the plan was proceeded with as rumoured he would resist it with his life, even if he were alone. Within a week of his arrival in India, he was imprisoned. When the British Government's decision was published, he declared a fast unto death from behind the prison walls, unless the electoral arrangement for the "depressed classes" was suitably modified. The British Government's reply was that it could be modified only by an agreement between the "depressed classes" and the 'caste-Hindus' themselves.

The news of the fast electrified the whole country. The Hindu conscience was stirred. The Hindu and "depressed class" leaders met in a conference at Poona. The solution which the conference achieved was a model of the "integration" technique. In the British Government's plan, 71 seats were allotted to the Scheduled Castes on the basis of *separate electorates* and reservation of seats, with the

additional right for the Scheduled Castes to contest the rest of the general Hindu seats. The Leaders' Conference gave to Dr. Ambedkar (the "depressed class" leader) 171 seats on the basis of reservation and *joint electorates* but with the proviso that for each of the seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes a panel of 4 candidates would be elected by the method of proportional representation by the Scheduled Castes voters who would form an electoral college for the purpose. These four candidates would then stand as candidates for election by the general electorates. Dr. Ambedkar's own proposal was that for 76 seats out of the Scheduled Castes quota, there should be a system of double election, the Scheduled Castes voters choosing a panel of 2 candidates for each seat, who would thereafter contest on behalf of the "depressed classes" in the joint electorate.

"If double election is good in regard to 76 seats, why not for all the 'depressed class' seats," asked Gandhiji. "So, Dr. Ambedkar, you will have the system of double election for all the 'depressed class' seats but you must raise the figure in the panel at the primary elections from two to five." Dr. Ambedkar ultimately agreed to 4.

Dr. Ambedkar wanted a referendum after 15 years (but was prepared to agree to 10) to decide whether the system of reservation of seats should continue or be given up. "I want it to stand as a challenge to Hindu Society to fulfil

their pledges — a sort of a Sword of Damocles," he explained.

"I too want the challenge and the Sword of Damocles, but why not let that challenge come at the end of 5 years? If you insist on 10 years, I shall begin to suspect that what you want is not to test the bonafides of the 'Caste Hindus' but time to organize an adverse referendum. So, 5 years or my life."

The solution was at last found — the whole question of the referendum to stand over, to be decided by mutual agreement in the future. "It bars nothing, while it makes it possible to do even without any referendum," explained Shri Rajagopalachari — the Brahmin leader from South India.

On this basis the Yeravda Pact was concluded. Dr. Ambedkar got a larger number of seats with reservation than the British Government had given him but coupled with such provisions that the British Government were not able to exploit the "depressed class" issue in the political struggle after that. Dr. Ambedkar who had begun by dubbing Gandhiji's fast, when it was commenced, as a "political stunt", reverentially touched his feet when he broke his fast. The main resolution adopted by the Leaders' Conference at Bombay declared that "henceforth no one shall be regarded as untouchable by reason of his birth" and that "it shall be the duty of the Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful

means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by custom upon the so-called "depressed classes", including the bar in respect of entry into temples." Untouchability has since been legally abolished under the present constitution, though much work yet remains to be done for the levelling up of the social and economic conditions of the Harijans.

For full story of that great fast and its technique, the curious are referred to the writer's *The Epic Fast.**

His other two fasts were undertaken to quell the frenzy of communal madness, the one in Calcutta in August 1947, the other — his last fast — in Delhi in January 1948. The secret of the phenomenal success of these fasts was perhaps that they were undertaken when he had all the armed resources of the State at his disposal to make use of, if he had so wished, but preferred to employ the weapon of self-suffering. The other reason perhaps was the completeness of his self-surrender to the Divine Will — so much so that the very urge to live except through His grace had almost vanished.

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IX

Can the non-violence technique be extended so as to meet the hypothetical case of foreign armed aggression? Gandhiji did indicate a plan though he had not had any opportunity to test it out. His plan of action was in three parts — before the invasion, during the invasion and after the invasion. Before the invasion the technique consisted in preventing it by a counter "invasion" in advance of the aggressor nation by good-will, friendliness, spirit of reconciliation and selfless service. How he planned to apply this method to check the trans-border raids in the North-Western Frontier Province — that land of fierce Pathan warriors renowned in history — will be found described in the writer's *A Pilgrimage for Peace.**

During the invasion the technique would consist in offering non-violent resistance unto death and to the last man to the invader and total non-co-operation with him, while not missing any opportunity of rendering humanitarian service to the individual members of the invading hosts in their personal capacity whenever they might be in distress. A detailed plan of action in this regard was developed by Gandhiji at a time when India was menaced by the Japanese invasion and the British Government had decided to withdraw

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their forces to a remote line of defence, which would have left large parts of the country open to the invader.* Should action outlined in the first two stages prove unsuccessful and the aggressor come to occupy the country, resistance would take the form of non-violent non-co-operation and all other forms of Satyagraha that were practised during India's non-violent freedom struggle against the British power.

The sceptic will perhaps here interject that all these techniques can be of no avail against the terrific coercive power which the totalitarian dictatorships today wield and the philosophy of brutality by which they have immuned themselves to all humane sentiment. The fact of the matter, however, is that it is the emergence of this very phenomenon that makes the adoption of these techniques inevitable if humanity is not to be utterly destroyed. During the last war the appalling destructiveness of armaments gave rise to the technique of frightfulness which means you do not need to kill if you can demonstrate your undoubted capacity to kill. By the use of this technique the totalitarian powers found it possible to subdue and enslave whole nations almost without firing a shot. It is not without significance that although the destructive power of armaments and the numbers involved in the last World War were far greater than in World War I, actual

* See Appendix A.

casualties were less. Proceeding on this analogy, Gandhiji argued that as the number of people groaning under the iron heel of militarism grows, it will pave the way for the discovery that if the oppressed masses only shed the fear of death, it might not be necessary for them to die to regain their freedom. The deadlier the weapons of destruction become, the greater becomes the necessity and, therefore, the possibility of humanity learning to confront them with a power of a different kind against which they cannot prevail. Armaments can but destroy. Yet total destruction is not what the tyrant seeks but co-operation, willing or forced, of the victim and this no power of armaments can extract from a people if they have developed the strength to say 'No' when they mean 'No'. The moment, therefore, the people become aware of soul-force or the power of the spirit, which is latent in every human being and which armaments can neither destroy nor subdue, the power of the latter will be sterilized and the spell of frightfulness broken. Gandhiji postulated only two conditions: (1) There must be a recognition of the existence of the soul — as apart from the body — and its permanent nature, "and this recognition must amount to a living faith". (2) In the last resort "this technique does not avail those who do not possess a living faith in the God of Love."

What about those thousands of Jews and others who perished in the incinerators and gas

chambers of the Nazis in Hitlerite Germany, one may again be asked. What did their non-violence avail them? The answer to this question is perhaps a counter question: did those who perished at the hands of the Nazis really practise non-violence? Historians have testified that it was the forgiving, triumphant smile of the Christian martyrs of old that planted in the hearts of the Roman Legionaries those obstinate questionings which ultimately undermined the foundation of the Roman Empire. Did the victims of Nazi tyranny meet their doom with that smile on their face, that forgiveness, faith and love in their hearts or was it with an unuttered curse on their lips, an impotent passion for revenge — which is the opposite of non-violence — in their hearts? It may sound harsh but the law is unrelenting. Besides, the hardening of the heart is often the result of a long, accumulated sense of injustice or wrong — real or fancied. When that is so, it calls for a commensurate volume of suffering of the purest type to neutralize it. If, at times, therefore, non-violence may not seem to work, it will only mean that more of it is needed and of greater purity. In other words, it is not the principle that is at fault but the instrument wielding it. Gandhiji held it as axiomatic that pure suffering, cheerfully undergone unto the end must melt even the stoniest heart. "How would you meet the atom-bomb...with non-violence?" he was asked by an American journalist on the last day of his

earthly sojourn. The reply he gave a few hours before the end is worth recording here: "I will not go underground. I will not go into shelter. I will come out in the open and let the pilot see I have not a trace of evil against him. The pilot will not see our faces from his great height, I know. But that longing in our hearts — that he will not come to harm — would reach up to him and his eyes would be opened." Then guessing what was probably passing in the questioner's mind, he added: "If those thousands who were done to death in Hiroshima, if they had died with that prayerful action — died openly with that prayer in their hearts — their sacrifice would not have gone in vain and the war would not have ended so disgracefully as it had."

X

Gandhiji did not believe that the ideal of peace could be realized in society so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions remained. The difficulty, however, is that if we try to make men equal through forcible expropriation by the State they cease to be free. If, on the other hand, they are left free, they become unequal owing to what Professor Haldane has called the inherent "inequality of man". In nature all men are born equal in the sense that they have a moral right to equal opportunity. But all have not equal talent. Some will,

therefore, have the ability to earn more than the rest. Gandhiji did not want to cramp talent by preventing people endowed with superior talent from earning more or to violently dispossess those who had more of their possessions. To bridge the gulf between the haves and have-nots he suggested instead that the haves should use their talent and the bulk of their earnings not for themselves but as a trust for the good of society. As "trustees" they would be entitled to retain for themselves a reasonable rate of commission in recognition of their service or usefulness to society. In the transitional period this would be left to be determined on a reasonable basis by themselves in consultation with society. Within certain limits the rate of commission itself would not matter very much so long as they agreed to surrender their existing titles based on absolute ownership for a trusteeship basis. In due course, when the ground was sufficiently prepared, trusteeship would become the law of the land and its operation, including succession and inheritance of wealth, acquired or otherwise, would be regulated by the State with the "minimum use of force", in conformity with the principle of trusteeship.

This, however, did not mean that pending the necessary legislation the transformation of the capitalists into trustees would be left to the sweet will of the capitalists. If they did not accept the new basis of ownership voluntarily, or if they proved impervious to reason, the

weapon of non-violent non-co-operation would be brought into play. For instance, if a land-lord refused to accept the principle of trusteeship, agricultural labour would boycott his cultivation and public opinion would not allow black-leg labour to be brought in or the State police to be used for evicting the boycotters in case they performed a sit-down strike on the acres of the land-lord. He summed up his trusteeship idea in the following formula :

1. Trusteeship provides a means of transforming the present capitalist order of society into an egalitarian one ; it gives no quarter to capitalism, but gives the present owning class a chance of reforming itself. It is based on the faith that human nature is never beyond redemption.

2. It does not recognize any right of private ownership of property except inasmuch as it may be permitted by society for its own welfare.

3. It does not exclude legislative regulation of the ownership and use of wealth.

4. Thus, under State-regulated trusteeship, an individual will not be free to hold or use his wealth for selfish satisfaction or in disregard of the interest of society.

5. Just as it is proposed to fix a decent minimum living wage, even so a limit should be fixed for the maximum income that could be allowed to any person in society. The difference between such minimum and maximum incomes should be reasonable and equitable and variable from time to time so much so that the tendency would be towards obliteration of the difference.

6. Under the Gandhian economic order the character of production will be determined by social necessity and not by personal whim or greed.

Would not " the legal fiction of trusteeship ", as a cynical critic put it, only serve to give to the institution of private ownership, which is the fruit of exploitation, a new lease of life ? Why not put all property straightaway under State ownership ? Gandhiji's reply was that whilst he agreed that the accumulation of capital by the individual in the present set up is largely the fruit of exploitation i.e. violence, he preferred the violence of the individual to State violence as being the lesser of the two evils. " If the State suppressed capitalism by violence, it would be caught in the coils of violence itself. . .and fail to develop non-violence at any time. The State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul, but the State is a soulless machine. . .Hence I prefer the doctrine of trusteeship."

Again, the State can conscript the surplus wealth through a steeply graded system of taxation but it cannot conscript the talent and good-will of the privileged class. Trusteeship, on the other hand, while it puts an end to the capitalistic order, insures to the capitalists the moral freedom to develop and turn their talents to good account for the service of society and thereby annexes their good-will for the amelioration of the masses. There is nothing that is realizable under a violent revolution and is intrinsically good which cannot be achieved in an equal or even greater measure under trusteeship. In addition, trusteeship avoids the evils of violence,

regimentation and suppression of individual liberty. Even if large sectors of industry are nationalized and put under State ownership, the existence of individual enterprise along side of it under a trusteeship system would provide a healthy antidote to slackness, inefficiency, corruption, lack of enterprise and bureaucratic autocracy which very often characterize State-ownership. It alone thus provides a possible escape from the cliche : "Make men free and they become unequal, make them equal and they cease to be free."

Could not trusteeship doctrine be used to justify one nation constituting itself as trustee of another ? The reply is that "trusteeship" is a means for remedying recurring inequalities that are inevitable in nature, not an excuse for creating inequalities artificially to be able to play at "trusteeship". That would be a travesty of its real meaning and purpose.

XI

There is yet another reason why Gandhiji was opposed to increasing occasions for State interference in the regulation of society. He attached the greatest importance to " moral freedom ". He wanted all reform to come from within and from below. He did not want progress to be imposed by an outside authority. He sensed danger in increasing what Jung has called the " fiction of the State ", viz. that " State is a sort of a super-individual endowed with inexhaustible power and resourcefulness which can accomplish what nobody would expect from an individual ". As Jung has very pertinently pointed out : " The dangerous incline leading down to mass psychology begins with this plausible thinking in big numbers and powerful organizations, where the individual dwindles away to mere nothingness." And again, " Everything that exceeds a certain human size evokes equally inhuman powers in man's unconscious " and thereby unleashes the " totalitarian demons ". Jung goes on to add : " The destructive power of our weapons has increased gigantically and forces this psychological problem on all mankind. Is the mental and moral condition of the men who decide on the use of these weapons equal to the enormity of the possible consequences ? "

Gandhiji was, therefore, against vesting more power in the State than was absolutely necessary or encouraging people to think that their salvation could come through some agency outside themselves. He wanted them to take their destiny in their own hands and realize their moral freedom without which economic and political freedom by themselves are incomplete.

XII

The world looks forward to the day when the law of the jungle that has so far ruled the relations between nations will be replaced by the rule of just law, as it has been in the case of individuals and groups within nations in all civilized society. But it needs no argument to show that a true United Nations Organization will come into being only when all nations big and small comprising it are fully independent and a nation, as Gandhiji pointed out, realizes its independence only to the extent to which it has assimilated non-violence. True democracy or freedom of the masses, can never come except through non-violence for the simple reason that the natural corollary to the use of untruthful and violent means would be to remove all opposition through the suppression or extermination of the antagonists. " That does not make for individual freedom. Individual freedom can have the fullest play only under unadulterated non-violence." It would be idle to expect the United

Nations Organization to fulfil its purpose so long as it or the nations composing it do not adopt truth and non-violence as their guiding principles and continue to be ruled by considerations of power-politics and diplomacy, as unfortunately is the case today.

Again, wars do not originate at the battle fronts. Nor does peace return automatically when actual fighting ceases. International tensions are very often an extension of the tensions within nations and the roots of war lie in causes that are endemic in society. That is also why the conscientious objector's traditional attitude of negation in regard to fighting has by itself hitherto proved inadequate. The problem of international peace therefore necessitates an investigation into the nature and causes of internal stresses and strains in society and the way to their removal.

We are today confronted with an unresolved contradiction between democracy and abundance, equality and individual freedom, progress and peace. Cutting across all 'cracies and 'isms is the problem of privilege which appears under a variety of forms. Under democracy it comes as monopoly of the means of production and distribution, under dictatorship as monopoly of political power, and in both as monopoly of intellect, technological knowledge and specialized experience.

The system of mass production, which a desire to have more and more of material goods

has brought into being, has made the frontiers of society so remote and its problems so intricate that an average individual who has to work for his living to make both ends meet has not enough time to understand the working of the social mechanism and so he can really influence his environment but little. He has to let the politicians and experts largely do his thinking for him. His initiative and power of decision are taken away from him. Advance of technology has thus actually resulted in the decline of individual liberty and a terrific concentration of power in the hands of small groups or bodies of men. Political bosses are today armed with far more effective instruments of coercion and propaganda, with which they can overcome popular resistance and hypnotize the masses, than their predecessors ever were before, while the people have nothing comparable at their disposal with which to defend their liberties. The increased vulnerability of society owing to its growing complexity has further aggravated the situation. Nations that have to depend on food supplies from outside live always under the fear that a foreign power might starve them into submission by severing their life lines. The city-dweller and the industrial proletariat, further, as a rule, live under the fear of unemployment and industrial instability resulting from economic fluctuations, slumps etc. That creates a feeling of insecurity, a psychology of fear, which the war mongers can easily exploit to create mass

hysteria. The only remedy is a radical simplification of the mechanics of living and reorganization of society on the basis of individual and regional self-sufficiency.

XIII

The picture that confronts us is of sick man and sick society. What else does the highest suicide rate in the United States — the most industrially advanced country in the world — signify ? Closely related to the question of peace and war is the question of the mental health of the people. Combative instinct is inherent in human nature ; it cannot be eradicated. It can only be transmuted. Unless it can find expression in the shape of socially useful, creative activity it results in neurosis. The present day methods of production by depriving the workmen of the opportunity for socially useful creative work have induced in him a state of neurosis. " Close partnership with Mother Earth, on the other hand, gives to the peasant an ingrained feeling of security and mental poise. The peasant too is exposed to the vagaries of weather etc. but these disasters only spur him on to renewed aggression against the elements or he can fall back upon the manual crafts and so on. That makes him predisposed for peace." * The same applies to the handicrafts man. " His combative instinct finds expression in creative work and so he lacks the

* *Education for Peace*, by Herbert Read.

desire to give expression to his destructive impulses." *

Gandhiji, therefore, advocated a return to a system of rural communities more or less self-sufficient in the matter of their basic needs. In this order of society agriculture will go hand in hand with industry. Machines will not be abolished ; people will have many more of them. But these machines will be simple machines which people themselves can operate, own and control. In this simple set-up society will be composed of small, manageable units, co-operatively knit together. People will be able to understand their environment and therefore effectively control it. Work will not be the anti-thesis of life but a means of realizing the full content of life. People will live in close contact with nature and enjoy free sunshine, fresh air and the aesthetic delights which nature freely provides but which it costs so much to make available to the urban industrial workers, even in a niggardly measure, synthetically.

This does not necessarily mean a "low standard of life" or a life of drudgery. For, there will be no limit to the employment of more efficient processes and tools. The level of machinery and organization that a community may ultimately adopt cannot be arbitrarily fixed. Probably it will vary from time to time and from place to place according to the needs, capacity and outlook of the people concerned ; the guiding

* *Education for Peace*, by Herbert Read.

principles always being that the machines should be simple and within the financial capacity of the common people to own individually or collectively. They should aid human labour, not displace it. The same will apply to the motive power used.

This system does not aim at evolving what Gandhiji dubbed as "the civilization of the rose without the thorn". It will not abolish all bodily labour as "the curse of Adam". On the contrary, he held that the principle of eating one's bread by the sweat of one's brow was an essential condition for the health, contentment and inner peace of the individual and society and that many of our present-day social ills were traceable to an infringement of the law of "bread-labour". Jung very aptly observed in the course of one of his addresses before the Swiss Society of Psychology: "Life demands for its consummation and fulfilment a balance between joy and suffering; but suffering is in itself unpleasant, people naturally prefer not to think about how much care and sorrow belong to the natural lot of man. So they use comforting words such as progress etc....forgetting that happiness itself is poison when the measure of suffering has not been fulfilled." Behind the neurosis which the world is today showing, is concealed, to quote Jung again, "*all the natural and necessary sufferings which the patient was unwilling to bear*".* And again, "the highest aim of

* Italics mine.

Psychotherapy is not to transport the patient into an impossible state of happiness but to help him to attain the firmness and philosophical patience which will enable him to endure necessary suffering."

This means that we have to learn to put a voluntary curb on our physical desires and return to spiritual values and spiritual basic disciplines. There is no escape from it. Even as it is, " dispersion " has become the watchword of the day in the West under the fear of the atomic bomb. But apart from and in addition to it, we have to realize the necessity of the slogan " back to the soil ", back to regional self-sufficiency in all vital respects, back to simplicity of living and back to spiritual values for the maintenance of the mental health of the people on which alone the structure of world security and world peace can be erected.

XIV

The non-violent attitude is indivisible. It has to be carried in all walks of life or else our non-violence will limp and lose its essential character. The question of population increase is the rock on which all efforts at erecting a non-violent order of society must founder unless it is tackled properly. Non-violent attitude must therefore be applied to this question of questions. There are only three possible solutions: (1) to use surplus population as canon

fodder, (2) to maintain it through colonialism — political or economic and (3) to regulate the birth-rate. Of these three the first two have to be rejected outright in the context of non-violence. With regard to the third again, the only method that is compatible with the basic principles of a non-violent society is the one based on self-control — full or partial. For, one cannot successfully practise the philosophy of voluntary restriction of one's physical wants, unless one carries the same attitude in regard to other questions including this one also. Who can be "wise, amaz'd, temperate and furious, loyal and neutral in a moment."!

XV

We are today faced with the phenomenon of shrinking food supplies with a steady increase in the world's population. Soil erosion and impairment of soil fertility have become a world problem. Experts have warned us that our present-day economy based on money values and the desire to exploit nature for quick profits, has set deserts on the march, and that if civilization is to avoid a long decline such as blighted North Africa and the Near East for centuries, we must return from an economy of exploitation to an economy of conservation. Gandhiji's system of economy is one of conservation. It enables the largest concentration of population to be maintained on the soil indefinitely in health and

reasonable comfort without impairing soil fertility. The outstanding features of this system are: (1) intensive, small scale, diversified farming as opposed to mechanized, large scale or collective farming, the total yield, as against yield per agricultural worker, being the highest under this system; (2) development of cottage crafts as ancillary to agriculture; (3) cattle-based economy, with strict enforcement of the "Law of Return" viz. to return to the soil in organic form what is taken out of the soil, without which the health and fertility of the soil cannot be fully maintained; (4) proper balance and relationship between animal, human and plant life — social health and stability being essentially the product of a symbiosis of the three; and (5) voluntary protection of both human and animal power against the competition of machinery as the price of social insurance.

XVI

As a means for building up a non-violent, non-exploiting social order, Gandhiji gave us his system of education known as the Basic or, more popularly, Wardha system of education. Its technique consists in developing not only the intellectual but also the physical and spiritual faculties of the child through the teaching and practice of *a socially useful manual craft. At the core of it is the principle of non-violence.* It is based on the theory that the intellect and the

whole personality of the child can be developed through intelligently directed activity of the "thinking hand". It is now beginning to be realized even in the West that it is not possible to raise an effective generation of nation builders and builders of democracy in an atmosphere of "illusion", i.e. if school is to be an "idyllic" spot far removed from the problems of individual and community life. The Wardha system of basic education teaches the children to solve by their own efforts the problems facing their families and their community in a non-violent and democratic way. By learning to tackle such problems as communal tensions — religious toleration, self-government, food, its cultivation and processing, clothing and disposal of garbage etc. in a non-violent and democratic way and corelating it with the why and wherefore of it, they get not only the whole education for life but an education that also carries with it the guarantee that the knowledge thus gained shall be rightly used.

Basic education is thus not merely a new technique of education but a technique for the realization of a specific ideal — the ideal of world peace and universal brotherhood, and as such it is worthy of our most serious consideration.

GANDHIAN TECHNIQUE AND THE WORLD CRISIS *

In the course of the discussions that have been going on, the question has again and again been asked, how did Gandhiji manage to convey the message of non-violence to such a large number of people and how did he make them practise non-violence on such a vast scale ?

The starting point of Gandhiji's technique was that non-violence is the strength of the weak. Therefore it turns upon insignificant, little things in life ; its instruments are also insignificant looking. In India there were 400 millions. We had the numbers on our side ; but numbers can also be a source of weakness. How to convert the numbers into a source of strength — not brute strength but the strength of non-violence — that was his problem. His instruments were poor, illiterate, ignorant men, women and

* Being the text of the oral statement made by the author in presenting his formal paper to the Seminar.

children. The question before him was to devise a form of action which these unsophisticated folk could practise, which would evoke the power latent in them and harness it for the freedom struggle. All his programmes of mass action therefore had an elemental simplicity about them. His education for non-violence too consisted of very small things in basic spiritual disciplines, as he called them.

He created heroes out of clay. He could do so because he ceaselessly strove to live the whole truth as he saw it. It is not enough to profess truth, it is not enough to proclaim truth ; what is necessary is that it must be proclaimed by the deed. His methods of propaganda was propaganda by the deed. He stood sentinel upon himself all the 24 hours. He examined all his actions in the light of the principles of Truth and Ahimsa, whether they satisfied all the implications and corollaries that flowed from the acceptance of these principles. When an idea is personified in action in all its purity, its power spreads far and wide. It does not then need a material medium for its propagation. Ordinarily what we say or think is belied by what we do and untruth in action chokes the power inherent in unadulterated truth. It is not possible for a human being to remove the hiatus completely between thought, word and deed ; it is not possible for a human being in the flesh to attain the complete ideal of non-violence ; but it is possible by constant endeavour and striving to progressively attenuate the

hiatus. Once the critical limit is crossed and the barrier pierced that confines the power of non-violence, an energy is released which knows no limit and which can fill the entire universe. It was Gandhiji's constant endeavour by dint of sleep-less discipline to attain to that state of unadulterated truth. To the extent that he succeeded in this, the power of his deed grew and produced the phenomenal results at which the world still marvels.

To make the masses see and feel that he was one of them and belonged to them, he took to the spinning wheel. He nursed it with all the passion of the soul that he was capable of. No matter how tired he was, how heavy the load of work he carried, he never failed to perform the sacrament of his daily spinning.

Food and clothing are the basic requirements of man. Gandhiji agreed with the materialistic theory of knowledge to the extent that he believed that our thinking is conditioned more by what we do with our hands, particularly the activities related to the satisfaction of our primary needs, than by what we are taught or told. Spinning wheel was intimately related to a basic requirement of four hundred millions. It provided Gandhiji with an instrument of mass education. The goal of all education has been defined to be to make right thinking and right action instinctive to us. Has not Ruskin said somewhere that the end of all education is to

make the love of truth and abhorrence of cruelty natural to man? Spinning wheel was at one time the symbol of India's backwardness, exploitation and slavery. Gandhiji made it the symbol of non-violence and a means for the cultivation of the discipline and organization of non-violence. It enabled him to carry his message even to the humblest cottage dwellers, and to establish a living bond of co-operation between them and the workers. That made non-violent, corporate action on a nation-wide scale possible.

The universality of the spinning wheel, in his eyes, was its greatest asset. His technique of non-violent action rested on his discovery that small, insignificant looking things when performed by millions of people together as part of a consciously directed effort, produce results far greater than any individual can achieve or than the sum total of their individual efforts put together. All of Gandhiji's activities had this thing in common — they were capable of being multiplied to the n'th degree.

We were discussing yesterday the question: what are we to do with nations that do not co-operate with the United Nations Organization, how we can reach them. It is no use blaming it all on the sinister influence of communism or wirepulling from the Kremlin. I am no admirer of communism or its tactics. But let us try to get down to the grass roots. What is it that makes people so susceptible to the communist propaganda? What is it that makes communism

dynamic? It is the oppression and exploitation of the weak and the less advanced people by the strong, the backing which reaction has received and still continues to receive at the hands of the big powers. We were talking of the "intransigence" of China the other day. What is the record of the big powers in China? Opium War, Boxer Rebellion, Extra-Territoria-lity—what do they all mean? Western democracies have supported corrupt, reactionary regimes in China, Viet Nam, Africa and Europe. That is what has made people like the Chinese so distrustful of the Western Powers. But for it, China might have been saved to democracy. What should be our attitude towards China to-day in terms of the Gandhian outlook? The plain answer is to admit her into the United Nations Organization unconditionally and without delay—and this not as strategy or tactics but as a genuine act of belated justice. If Gandhiji had an opponent in the Congress he preferred to have him inside the Working Committee than outside. He used to say: "I shall be able to act upon him better, if he is inside. Outside he will be beyond the direct operation of my non-violence." And let me tell you that his action was justified by results.

A tidal wave of consciousness is sweeping over all the suppressed and oppressed races of the world and it is our great privilege to have Dr. Bunche in our midst who can very well speak for these people. Has the Gandhian

technique any application here? If we can make it possible for these people to resist their exploitation by non-violent means, we shall have half won the battle of non-violence all over the world.

I remember a deputation of Africans from South Africa once came to Gandhiji and asked him: "Tell us what we are to do? Is there any hope for us?" His reply was: "If there is one thing that can save you, it is the spinning wheel and all that it stands for." He offered to train a dozen of their young men in the various constructive activities and to send them back in their turn to educate and organize their people in the same way. It is a suggestion worthy of your serious consideration. You will perhaps smile at the naivete of the suggestion. Let me assure you it is no laughing matter.

The African native is a freedom-loving creature. He hates to slave for anybody. To induce him to sell his labour he is made to depend on the White settlers for the satisfaction of his essential needs. When these are non-existent they are created artificially. For instance, there is a by-law in South Africa that a Zulu or a Bantu must wear a piece of regulation cloth in order to visit a Municipal area, which of course, he must purchase. Initiation into the liquor habit and the enforcement of excise regulations is another means of impounding their labour. Why should they have to purchase the first by doing forced labour and why should they not be taught to abjure liquor altogether? Nature has blessed

them with all the resources to enable them to live a happy, contented, civilized life. All that they need is education in the arts of life and civilization and the discipline and organization of non-violence to put an end to their exploitation.

In a remarkable passage the author of *The Martyrdom of Man* * has shown the part which the shuttle and the handloom, the plough and the call to prayer have played in the spread of civilization into the heart of Africa. The analogy between that historical process and the Gandhian technique is obvious. You cannot go on preaching sermons to the poor folk for long; they will feel bored. Nor can you make the masses stand on moral tiptoe, as it were, all the time. But if you talk to them in terms of their daily wants and show them how they can realize their freedom in respect of them through their own effort and by dint of co-operation amongst themselves you create a basis for discipline and organization that rests not upon force but its opposite. It will give them a sense of power and cohesion and enable them to resist aggression and exploitation by the power of non-violence. Arm these people with this technique and you remove not only their exploitation and oppression but also to a large extent the challenge of communism which sets out to eradicate exploitation and oppression but replaces it with something equally bad if not worse.

* See Appendix B.

Appendix A

ARMED INVASION AND NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE

When after the Japanese invasion of Burma, during the Second World War, the Japanese army threatened to overrun India, the British authorities in India were seized by panic. General Molesworth, Deputy Chief of the General Staff in India, declared that the British forces would retire to a remote line of defence, leaving large parts of Indian territory open to the Japanese invasion. The British officials even issued plans for the evacuation of Delhi, Madras, Calcutta and some coastal towns of Orissa. At the same time so deep was their distrust of the people that far from providing them with arms they did not allow even volunteer corps or groups for self-protection and patrolling to be organized. Mirabehn — Miss Slade — at Gandhiji's instance, after touring Orissa, sent a detailed report of the feeling of helplessness, panic and resentment against the British power prevailing among the people and asked him some questions as to what the people should do in the event of a Japanese invasion. The following are relevant portions of Mirabehn's letter and Gandhiji's reply:

We may take it that the Japanese will land somewhere along the Orissa coast. Probably there will be no bombing or firing at the time of landing, as there are no defence measures on the coast. From the coast they will advance rapidly across the flat dry rice fields, where the only obstructions are rivers and ditches, now mostly dry and nowhere unfordable. As far as we are able to make out there will be no serious attempt to hold the Japanese advance until the hilly and wooded regions of the Orissa States are reached.

The army of defence, whatever it is, is reported to be hidden in the jungle of these parts. It is likely to make a desperate attempt to defend the Jamshedpur road, but the chances of its being successful must be very small. That means we may expect a battle to be fought in the north west of Orissa, after which the Japanese army will pass on into Bihar. At that time the Japanese are not likely to be broadly distributed over the country, but concentrated on their lines of communication between the sea and their advancing army. The British administration will have previously disappeared from the scene.

The problem before us is, in the event of these things happening, how are we to act ?

The Japanese armies will rush over the fields and through the villages, not as avowed enemies of the population, but as chasers and destroyers of the British and American war effort. The population in its turn, is vague in its feelings. The strongest feeling is fear and distrust of the British, which is growing day by day on account of the treatment they are receiving. Anything that is not British is therefore something welcome. Here is a funny example. The villagers in some parts say — "Oh, the aeroplanes that make a great noise are British, but there are silent planes also, and they are Mahatma's planes." I think the only thing possible for these simple innocent people to learn is the attitude of neutrality, for it is, in reality, the only position that can be made logical to them. The British

not only leave them to their fate without even instructing them in self-protection from bombing etc., but they issue such orders as will, if obeyed, kill them before the day of battle comes. How then can they be ready enthusiastically to obstruct the Japanese who are chasing this detested Raj, especially when the Japanese are saying, "It is not you we have come to fight"? But I have found the villagers ready to take up the position of neutrality. That is to say, they would leave the Japanese to pass over their fields and villages, and try as far as possible not to come in contact with them. They would hide their foodstuffs and money, and decline to serve the Japanese. But even that much resistance would be difficult to obtain in some parts, the dislike of the British Raj being so great, that anything anti-British will be welcomed with open arms. I feel we have got to try and gauge the maximum resistance which the average inhabitants may be expected to put up, and maintain and make that our definite stand. A steady, long sustained stand, though not cent per cent resistance, will be more effective in the long run than a stiff stand, which quickly breaks.

This maximum sustainable stand which we may expect from the average people is probably:

1. To resist firmly, and mostly non-violently, the commandeering by the Japanese of any land, houses, or movable property.

2. To render no forced labour to the Japanese.

3. Not to take up any sort of administrative service under the Japanese. (This may be hard to control in connection with some types of city people, Government opportunists and Indians brought in from other parts.)

4. To buy nothing from the Japanese.

5. To refuse their currency and any effort on their part at setting up a Raj.

(Lack of workers and lack of time make it very hard, but we have to strive to stem the tide.)

Now as to certain difficulties and questions which arise :

1. The Japanese may offer to pay for labour, food and materials in British currency notes. Should the people refuse to sell for good prices or work for a good wage ? For long sustained resistance over many months it may be difficult to prevent this. So long as they refuse to buy or take " service ", the exploitation danger is kept off.

2. What should be done about the rebuilding of bridges, canals etc. which the British will have blown up ? We shall also need the bridges and canals. Should we therefore set our hands to their rebuilding, even if it means working side by side with the Japanese, or should we retire on the approach of Japanese bridge builders ?

3. If Indian soldiers, who were taken prisoners in Singapore and Burma, land with the Japanese invading army, what should be our attitude towards them ? Should we treat them

with the same aloofness as we are to show the Japanese or should we not try to win them over to our way of thinking ?

4. After the exodus (before the approaching Japanese) of the British Raj, what shall we do about currency ?

5. After battles have been fought and the Japanese armies will have advanced, the battle-field will be left strewn with the dead and wounded. *I think we must unhesitatingly work side by side with the Japanese in burning and burying the dead and picking up and serving the wounded.* The Japanese are likely to attend to the lightly wounded of their own men and take prisoner the lightly wounded of their enemy, but the rest would probably be left, and it will be our sacred duty to attend to them. For this we are from now planning the training of volunteers under the guidance of local doctors. Their services can also be used in case of internal disturbances, epidemics etc.

6. Besides the dead and wounded on the battle-field, a certain amount of rifles, revolvers and other small arms are likely to be left lying about unpicked up by the Japanese. If we do not make a point of collecting these things they are likely to fall into the hands of robbers, thieves, and other bad characters, who always come down like hawks to loot a battle-field. In an unarmed country like India this would lead to much trouble. In the event of our collecting such arms and ammunition, what should we do with them ?

My instinct is to take them out to sea and drop them in the ocean. Please tell us what you advise.

Gandhiji's reply dated Sevagram, 31st May 1942 :

I have your very complete and illuminating letter. . .I come straight to your questions which are all good and relevant.

(1) I think we must tell the people what they should do. They will act according to their capacity. If we begin to judge their capacity and give direction accordingly our directions will be halting and even compromising which we should never do. You will therefore read my instructions in that light. Remember that our attitude is that of complete non-co-operation with the Japanese army, therefore we may not help them in any way, nor may we profit by any dealings with them. Therefore we cannot sell anything to them. If the people are not able to face the Japanese army, they will do as armed soldiers do, i.e. retire when they are overwhelmed. And if they do so, the question of having any dealings with Japanese does not and should not arise. If, however, the people have not the courage to resist the Japanese unto death and the courage and capacity to evacuate the portion invaded by the Japanese, they will do the best they can in the light of instructions. One thing they should never do — to yield willing submission to the Japanese. That will be a cowardly act, and unworthy of a freedom-loving people. They must

not escape from one fire only to fall into another and probably more terrible. Their attitude therefore must always be of resistance to the Japanese. No question, therefore, arises of accepting British currency notes or Japanese coins. They will handle nothing from Japanese hands. So far as dealings with our own people are concerned they will either resort to barter or make use of such British currency as they have, in the hope that the National Government that may take the place of British Government will take up from the people all the British currency in accordance with its capacity.

(2) Question about co-operation in bridge building is covered by the above. There can be no question of this co-operation.

(3) If Indian soldiers come in contact with our people, we must fraternize with them if they are well disposed, and invite them, if they can, to join the nation. Probably they have been brought under promise that they will deliver the country from foreign yoke. There will be no foreign yoke and they will be expected to befriend people and obey National Government that might have been set up in place of British Government. If the British have retired in an orderly manner, leaving things in Indian hands, the whole thing can work splendidly and it might even be made difficult for the Japanese to settle down in India or any part of it in peace, because they will have to deal with a population which will be sullen and resistant. It is difficult to say

what can happen. It is enough if people are trained to cultivate the power of resistance, no matter which power is operating — the Japanese or the British.

(4) Covered by (1) above.

(5) The occasion may not come, but if it does, co-operation will be permissible and even necessary.

(6) Your answer about the arms found on the wayside is most tempting and perfectly logical. It may be followed but I would not rule out the idea of worthy people finding them and storing them in a safe place if they can. If it is impossible to store them and keep them from mischievous people yours is an ideal plan.

Appendix B

The following extracts are from the Chapter entitled "Religion" in Winwood Reade's *The Martyrdom of Man*:

An African village (old style) is usually a street of huts, with walls like hurdles, and the thatch projecting so that its owner may sit beneath it in sun or rain. The door is low ; one has to crawl in order to go in. There are no windows. The house is a single room. In its midst burns a fire which is never suffered to go out, for it is a light in darkness, a servant, a companion, and a guardian angel ; it purifies the miasmatic air. The roof and walls are smoke-dried, but clean ; in one corner is a pile of wood neatly cut up into billets, and in another is a large earthen jar filled with water, on which floats a gourd or calabash, a vegetable bowl. Spears, bows, quivers and nets hang from pegs upon the walls. Let us suppose that it is night ; four or five black forms are lying in a circle with their feet towards the fire, and two dogs with pricked up ears creep close to the ashes which are becoming grey and cold.

The day dawns ; a dim light appears through the crevices and crannies of the walls. The sleepers rise and roll up their mats, which are their beds, and place on one side the round logs of wood which are their pillows. The man takes down his bow and arrows from the wall, fastens wooden rattles round his dogs' necks, and goes

out into the bush. The women replenish the fire, and lift up an inverted basket whence sally forth a hen and her chickens, which make at once for the open door to find their daily bread for themselves outside. The women take hoes, and go to the plantation, or they take pitchers to fill at the brook. They wear round the waist, before and behind, two little aprons made from a certain bark, soaked and beaten until it is as flexible as leather. Every man has a plantation of these cloth trees round his hut. The unmarried girls wear no clothes at all; but they are allowed to decorate themselves with bracelets and anklets of iron, flowers in their ears, necklaces of red berries like coral, girdles of white shells, hair oiled and padded out with the chignon, and sometimes white ashes along the parting.

The ladies fill their pitchers, and take their morning bath, discussing the merits or demerits of their husbands. The air is damp and cold, and the trees and grass are heavy with dew, but presently the sun begins to shine, the dewdrops fall, heavy and large as drops of rain; the birds chirp; the flowers expand their drowsy leaves, and receive the morning calls of butterflies and bees. The forest begins to buzz and hum like a great factory awaking to its work.

When the sun is high, boys come from the bush with vegetable bottles frothing over with palm wine. The cellar of the African, and his glass and china shop, and his clothing warehouse, are in the trees. In the midst of the village is a

kind of shed, a roof supported on bare poles. It is the palaver house, in which at this hour the old men sit, and debate the affairs of state or decide law suits, each orator holding a spear when he is speaking, and planting it in the ground before him as he resumes his seat. Oratory is the African's one fine art: his delivery is fluent; his harangues, though diffuse, are adorned with phrases of wild poetry. That building is also the club house of the elders, and there, when business is over, they pass the heat of the day, seated on logs which are smooth and shiny from use. At the hour of noon their wives or children bring them palm wine, and present it on their knees, clapping their hands in token of respect. And then all is still. It is the hour of silence and tranquillity; the hour which the Portuguese call *the calm*. The sun sits enthroned on the summit of the sky; its white light is poured upon the earth; the straw thatch shines like snow. The forest is silent; all nature sleeps.

Then down, down, down sinks the sun, and its rays shoot slantwise through the trees. The hunters return, and their friends run out and greet them as if they had been gone for years, murmuring to them in a kind of baby language, calling them by their names of love, shaking their right hands, caressing their faces, patting them upon their breasts, embracing them in all ways except with the lips, for the kiss is unknown among the Africans. And so they toy and babble and laugh with one another till the sun

turns red, and the air turns dusky, and the giant trees cast deep shadows across the street. Strange perfumes arise from the earth ; fireflies sparkle ; grey parrots come forth from the forest, and fly screaming round intending to roost in the neighbourhood of man. The women bring their husbands the ground-dish of boiled plantains or bush-yams, made hot with red pepper, seasoned with fish or venison sauce. And when this simple meal is ended, boom ! boom ! goes the big drum ; the sweet reed flute pipes forth ; the girls and lads begin to sing. In a broad clean swept place they gather together, jumping up and down with glee : the young men form in one row, the women in another, and dance in two long lines, retreating and advancing with graceful undulations of their bodies, and arms waving in the air. And now there is a squealing, wailing, unearthly sound, and out of the wood, with a hop, skip, and jump, comes Mumbo Jumbo, a hideous mask on his face and a scourge in his hand. Woe to the wife who would not cook her husband's dinner, or who gave him saucy words ; for Mumbo Jumbo is the censor of female morals. Well the guilty ones know him as they run screaming to their huts. Then again the dance goes on, and if there is a moon it does not cease throughout the night.

Such is the picturesque part of savage life. But it is not savage life ; it merely lies upon the surface as paint lies upon the skin. Let us take a walk through that same village on another day.

Here, in a hut, is a young man with one leg in the stocks, and with his right hand bound to his neck by a cord. The palm wine, and the mid-night dance, and the furtive caresses of Asua overpowered his discretion; he was detected, and now he is "put in log". If his relations do not pay the fine, he will be sold as a slave; or if there is no demand for slaves in that country, he will be killed. His friends reprove him for trying to steal what the husband was willing to sell; and might he not have guessed that Asua was a decoy?

Another day the palaver-house has the aspect of a Crockford's. An old man, who is one of the village grandees, is spinning nuts for high stakes, and has drunk too much to see that he is overmatched. He loses his mats, his weapons, his goats, and his fowls, his plantation, his house, his slaves whom he took prisoners in his young and warlike days, his wives, and his children, and his aged mother who fed him at her breast—all are lost, all are gone. And then, with flushed eyes and trembling hand, he begins to gamble for himself. He stakes his right leg, and loses it. He may not move it until he has won it back, or until it is redeemed. He loses both legs; he stakes his body, and loses that also, and becomes a bond-servant, or is sold as a slave.

Let us give another scene. A young man of family has died; the whole village is convulsed with grief and fear. It does not appear natural to them that a man should die before he has

grown old. Some malignant power is at work among them. Is it an evil spirit whom they have unwittingly offended, and who is taking its revenge, or is it a witch? The great fetish-man has been sent for, and soon he arrives, followed by his disciples. He wears a cap waving with feathers, and a parti-coloured garment covered with charms; horns of gazelles, shells of snails, and a piece of leopard's liver wrapped up in the leaves of a poison-giving tree. His face is stained with the white juice from a dead man's brain. He rings an iron bell as he enters the town, and at the same time the Drum begins to beat. The Drum has its language, so that those who are distant from the village understand what it is saying. With short, lively sounds it summons to the dance; it thunders forth the alarm of fire or war, loudly and quickly with no interval between the beats; and now it tolls the hour of judgment and the day of death. The fetish-man examines the dead man, and says it is the work of a witch. He casts lots with knotted cords; he mutters incantations; he passes round the villagers, and points out the guilty person, who is usually some old woman whom popular opinion has previously suspected and is ready to condemn. She is, however, allowed the benefit of an ordeal; a gourd filled with *the red water* is given her to drink. If she is innocent, it acts as an emetic; if she is guilty, it makes her fall senseless to the ground. She is then put to death with a variety of tortures; burnt alive, or torn limb from limb; tied

on the beach at low water to be drowned by the rising tide; rubbed with honey and laid out in the sun; or buried in an ant-hill, the most horrible death of all.

These examples are sufficient to show that the life of the savage is not a happy one; and the existence of each clan or tribe is precarious in the extreme. They are like the wild animals, engaged from day to night in seeking food, and ever watchful against the foes by whom they are surrounded. The men who go out hunting, the girls who go with their pitchers to the village brook, are never sure that they will return; for there is always war with some neighbouring village, and their method of making war is by ambuscade. But besides these real and ordinary dangers, the savage believes himself to be encompassed by evil spirits, who may at any moment spring upon him in the guise of a leopard, or cast down upon him the dead branch of a tree. In order to propitiate these invisible beings, his life is entangled with intricate rites; it is turned this way and that way as oracles are delivered, or as omens appear. It is impossible to describe, or even to imagine, the tremulous condition of the savage mind; yet the traveller can see from their aspect and manners that they dwell in a state of never-ceasing dread.

Let us now suppose that a hundred years have passed, and let us visit that village again. The place itself, and the whole country around,

has been transformed. The forest has disappeared, and in its stead are fields covered with the glossy blades of the young rice; with the tall red tufted maize; with the millet and the Guinea corn; with the yellow flowers of the tobacco plant, growing in wide fields; and with large shrub-beries of cotton, the snowy wool peeping forth from the expanding leaves. Before us stands a great town surrounded by walls of red clay flanked by towers, and with heavy wooden gates. Day dawns, and the women come forth to the brook decorously dressed in blue cotton robes passed over the hair as a hood. Men ride forth on horseback, wearing white turbans and swords suspended on their right shoulders by a crimson sash. They are the unmixed descendants of the forest savage; their faces are those of pure negroes, but the expression is not the same. Their manners are grave and composed; they salute one another, saying in the Arabic, "Peace be with you." The palaver house or town-hall is also the mosque; the parliamentary debates and the law trials, which are there held, have all the dignity of a religious service: they are opened with prayer, and the name of the Creator is often solemnly invoked by the orator or advocate, while all the elders touch their foreheads with their hands, and murmur in response, Amina! Amina! (Amen, Amen). The town is pervaded by a bovine smell, sweet to the nostrils of those who have travelled long in the beefless lands of the people of the forest. Sounds of industry may

also be heard ; not only the clinking of the blacksmith's hammer, but also the rattling of the loom, the thumping of the cloth maker, and the song of the cordwainer, as he sits cross-legged making saddle or shoes. The women, with bow, and distaff, and spindle, are turning the soft tree-wool into thread ; the work in the fields is done by slaves. The elders smoke or take snuff in their verandahs, and sometimes study a page of the Koran. When the evening draws on there is no sound of flute and drum. A bonfire of brushwood is lighted in the market place, and the boys of the town collect around it with wooden boards in their hands, and bawl their lessons, swaying their bodies to and fro, by which movement they imagine the memory is assisted. Then rises a long loud harmonious cry, "Come to prayers, come to prayers. Come to security. God is great. He liveth and he dieth not. Come to prayers. O thou Bountiful ! "

> La ilah illah Allah : Muhammed Rasul Allah. Allahu Akbar. Allahu Akbar.

Such towns as these may be less interesting to the traveller than the pagan villagers ; he finds them merely a secondhand copy of Eastern life. But though they are not so picturesque, their inhabitants are happier and better men. Violent and dishonest deeds are no longer arranged by pecuniary compensation. Husbands can no longer set wife-traps for their friends ; adultery is treated as a criminal offence. Men can no longer

squander away their relations at the gaming table, and stake their own bodies on a throw. Men can no longer be tempted to vice and crime under the influence of palm wine. Women can no longer be married by a great chief in herds, and treated like beasts of burden and like slaves. Each wife has an equal part of her husband's love by law; it is not permitted to forsake and degrade the old wife for the sake of the young. Each wife has her own house, and the husband may not enter until he has knocked at the door and received the answer, *Bismillah*—in the name of God. Every boy is taught to read and write in Arabic, which is the religious and official language in Soudan, as Latin was in Europe, in the Middle Ages; they also write their own language with the Arabic character, as we write ours with the Roman letters. In such countries, the policy of isolation is at an end; they are open to all the Moslems in the world, and are thus connected with the lands of the East. Here there is a remarkable change, and one that deserves a place in history. It is a movement the more interesting since it is still actively going on.

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